

**THE PROBLEM OF SPLITTER DEFINITION IN THE COMMUNITY IN DOLOK
MANAMPANG VILLAGE, DOLOK MASIHUL DISTRICT, SERDANG BEDAGAI REGENCY**

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the problematics of splinter groups (splinter sects) that have emerged in Dolok Manampang Village and their impact on the religious and social life of the local community. This phenomenon has drawn attention due to the emergence of teachings that deviate from mainstream Islam, both theologically and in ritual practices. The research focuses on several key aspects: the identity and doctrinal deviations of the splinter group, the resulting social and religious impacts, the responses of the community and religious leaders, and efforts to strengthen faith and maintain social harmony. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach using data collection techniques such as interviews, observation, and document analysis. The findings show that the presence of the splinter group has caused unrest among residents, leading to disrupted social harmony and polarization in community relations. Religious leaders and community members have responded with various approaches, including rejection, religious education, and open dialogue to prevent further conflict. Comprehensive strategies are needed to counter the negative influence of such groups, including strengthening faith-based education within the community, inclusive religious counseling, and collaboration among religious leaders, educational institutions, and village authorities. These efforts aim to preserve social cohesion, reinforce religious conviction, and prevent social disintegration caused by extreme ideological differences.

Keywords: Splinter Groups; Doctrinal Deviation; Religious and Social Life; Community Response; Faith Strengthening.

INTRODUCTION

Islam is a universal religion and has spread widely to various corners of the world. In the process of its spread, Islam experienced acculturation and adaptation to the culture and social context of local communities. This resulted in a variety of different religious practices and understandings. This diversity, if addressed wisely, can be an intellectual and spiritual asset that enriches the treasury of Islamic thought. However, these differences also have the potential to create tension, both theologically and socially, especially when they deviate from the basic principles of authentic Islamic teachings. One form of deviation in the context of religious understanding is known as splinter groups. This term refers to groups that are considered to have deviated from the main teachings of Islam as believed by the majority of the people. Generally, these groups show characteristics such as extreme interpretations of holy texts, claims to absolute truth, and rejection of the scientific authority of ulama and official Islamic institutions. These symptoms are often early indicators of the emergence of splinter groups in society. (Ivan Sunata, 2025)

The characteristics of splinter groups are often seen in the way they interpret verses of the Qur'an and hadith in a way that deviates from the established scientific rules of interpretation and hadith science. They also usually glorify a certain figure as the holder of absolute truth, who is sometimes considered to have his own revelation or special charisma. Not infrequently, they separate themselves socially and spiritually from other Muslim communities by developing exclusive teachings and rejecting socio-religious integration. In their religious practices, these groups often form closed communities that carry out religious rites that are not recognized in mainstream Islamic teachings. Their forms of worship can be strikingly different and even violate sharia principles, causing unrest in the surrounding community. When these teachings spread and are accepted by some people, the potential for horizontal conflict increases. (Aria Rahman, 2023)

The impact of the existence of splinter sects is not only limited to the realm of faith or theology, but also extends to social aspects. Community rejection of groups considered deviant can give rise to social tension, prejudice, and even violence. In addition, it is not uncommon for these sects to be exploited by certain parties for the interests of power, politics, or economics, thus exacerbating the potential for existing conflicts. From a sociological perspective, rural communities are highly vulnerable to the spread of deviant teachings. Low levels of religious education, dependence on charismatic figures, and weak social control make villages easy targets for the infiltration of splinter teachings. Minimal access to correct information and the lack of active roles of official religious institutions also widen the gap for the development of such groups. (Abu Rokhmad, 2019)

These symptoms can be observed in Dolok Manampang Village, Dolok Masihul District, Serdang Bedagai Regency. In this area, there are strong indications of the existence of certain groups suspected of adhering to splinter sects. The community's response to this group is also varied: some openly reject it, some choose to be passive, and some are interested in following it for spiritual reasons or personal closeness to the central figure of the group. The phenomenon that occurred in Dolok Manampang Village is interesting to study academically because it reflects the complex socio-religious dynamics in the outskirts. Changes in religious practices indicate a shift in the community's perspective on Islamic teachings. Without a complete understanding, the community can be trapped in extreme attitudes: between excessive fanaticism or negligence in responding to deviations in the faith. (Wahyu Iryana, 2018)

Through this study, the researcher attempts to objectively understand the form of teachings carried out by the splinter group that developed in the village. This study also aims to identify the worship practices carried out by the group, as well as to examine the extent to which these practices deviate from the authentic Islamic creed according to the views of the majority of scholars. In addition, this study also emphasizes a sociological approach to understand the social responses and impacts that arise among the local community. This study is intended to answer a number of basic questions: what is the form and content of the splinter group teachings in Dolok Manampang Village? How does the community respond to the existence of the group? And to what extent does it influence the social and religious life of the community as a whole? The answers to these questions are expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the reality of religiousness that is currently taking place in the village.

To answer these questions, this study uses a qualitative approach with data collection methods in the form of field observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. This approach was chosen so that researchers can gain a deep and contextual understanding. In addition, the theoretical framework in the sociology of religion and studies on the deviation of Islamic teachings will be used as analytical tools to systematically examine existing phenomena. (Marinu Waruwu, 2023)

The urgency of this research lies in the urgent need for religious education based on scientific and authoritative understanding. In an era of open information like today, society is easily exposed to various teachings whose sources and validity are unclear. Therefore, scientific guidance is needed that can provide clarification and help society recognize the boundaries of Islamic orthodoxy. The expected contribution of this research is not only theoretical as an enrichment in the treasury of religious studies, but also practical for policy makers, religious figures, and the general public. (Bartolomeus Samho, 2023)

The findings of this study can be used as a basis for formulating strategies for preventing and handling the spread of deviant sects, as well as being a consideration in formulating religious policies that support the purity of faith and the preservation of social harmony. Thus, this study has a strategic value in strengthening the resilience of faith and increasing public awareness of religious deviations. Ultimately, it is hoped that the religious life of the community, especially in villages, will continue to run in accordance with the teachings of pure Islam and rahmatan lil 'alamin.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explore and understand in depth the social and religious realities that arise due to the existence of splinter sects in Dolok Manampang Village, Dolok Masihul District, Serdang Bedagai Regency. This approach was chosen because it is able to deeply reveal the meaning and response of society to the symptoms of deviation of teachings that occur outside the mainstream of Islam. Data collection was carried out through two main techniques, namely in-depth interviews and literature reviews. Interviews were conducted directly with informants who were selected purposively, such as religious leaders, youth leaders, village officials, and people who were involved or had an understanding of the existence of the sect. The interview model used was semi-structured, with the aim of providing flexibility in exploring information broadly and contextually. The literature review was conducted by examining a number of relevant literature, including scientific works, Islamic books, academic journals, fatwas of scholars, and other supporting documents. This study aims to provide a conceptual framework in understanding and interpreting field data, as well as strengthening the validity of research arguments. The data obtained were analyzed qualitatively, through the process of data reduction, compiling data into the form of thematic narratives, and drawing conclusions. The analysis process aims to find patterns of findings that are in accordance with the problems being studied. To maintain the validity of the data, a source triangulation technique is used, namely by comparing the results of interviews from various sources and matching them with library references.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Splinter Streams and Deviation of Teachings

Splinter sects refer to religious sects or groups that show significant differences in religious beliefs, practices, or interpretations compared to the majority or mainstream of a religion. Splinter sects are often considered controversial or considered to deviate from official teachings and can be a source of tension and conflict within religious communities. Splinter sects can have varying impacts on religious communities and society as a whole. Some splinter sects can develop into large movements that have a strong following and even influence change in the wider religion. However, splinter sects can also cause internal conflict within religious communities, especially if the sect is considered to threaten official teachings or religious authority. (Indra Harahap, 2023)

Splinter sects are sects that deviate from the true teachings of Islam. Usually they have their own different teachings and sometimes send people. (Dwi Maulia Arifah, 2025) Tamimi Mujahid said that *"Splinter sects are like a sect or a manhaj if you say, but in this case they are like the opposite of Islamic teachings themselves, like they are a sect that deviates from the teachings of our religion, so they often interfere with other people or indoctrinate, and create new teachings in the name of Islam, so they often strongly oppose if there are people who disagree with them like that"*. (Tamimi Mujahid, 2025)

There are several factors that have caused the growth of deviant sects in Indonesia, namely: first, this reform era is considered by some people as an era of freedom to do and express anything, including believing in and practicing strange beliefs and understandings. Second, the serious economic, social, political and other problems, so many hope for the emergence of "The Savior" who can be in the form of the Just King or Imam Mahdi. This situation can easily be exploited by individuals who carry deviant teachings. Third, deviant sects can be used as a tool to seek popularity

and material and spiritual benefits. Fourth, there are still many Muslims whose faith and religious knowledge are very minimal, so they are quickly influenced and trapped by deviant teachings, especially if these deviant teachings are presented in an attractive package. Fifth, the legal regulations relating to the establishment and development of religious sects in the country are very loose. Until now there have been no regulations governing which religious beliefs and sects may or may not grow and develop in this country. Sixth, preaching so far, including that delivered by Islamic preaching organizations such as Muhammadiyah, NU and others, has not reached all levels of society. There are still many groups of people who have not been touched by preaching, so they are easily influenced by deviant sects. (Nasir S, 2020)

The benchmark of a cult is that the beliefs it adheres to are contrary to the beliefs that are in accordance with all kinds of rules, systems, and regulations that apply in its holy book. So a cult that has deviated from its original teachings is called a cult. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issued 10 criteria for a cult, including:

- a) Denying the pillars of faith and the pillars of Islam
- b) Believing in and/or following a creed that is not in accordance with the shar'i propositions (Al Qur'an and as-Sunnah),
- c) Believing in the revelation after the Qur'an
- d) Denying the authenticity and/or truth of the contents of the Qur'an
- e) Interpreting the Qur'an without following the rules of interpretation
- f) Denying the position of the Prophet's hadith as a source of Islamic teachings
- g) Harassing and/or demeaning the prophets and apostles
- h) Denying the Prophet Muhammad SAW as the last prophet and apostle
- i) Changing the points of worship that have been determined by sharia
- j) Calling fellow Muslims infidels without any Islamic justification. (Rati Pratama Ayun, 2024)

As in the village of Dolok Manampang, the splinter sect gave rise to teachings that deviated from the teachings of Shaha Islam. Halimatusaqdiah, a resident, said, "The splinter sect deviates in terms of faith, worship, and how to understand the Qur'an and I had the opportunity to attend one of the group's meetings, explaining that in the forum there was a very unusual religious understanding, including the belief that only their group would obtain salvation in the afterlife, as well as the teaching that fasting can be replaced with special dhikr without the need to carry out the obligation to hold back hunger and thirst, then I felt surprised and confused, because the teachings were very far from the Islamic values that I had learned since childhood, sometimes they also had rituals that were not in accordance with sharia". (Halimatusaqdiah, 2025)

Aqsol Arizki added that "these sects usually have different teachings from Islam in general, their leaders are considered holy or like prophets, and like to interpret religion as they please, then there is a central figure who is very much obeyed, there is a group of followers and sometimes they have special symbols or signs that are used to distinguish themselves". (Aqsol Arizki, 2025)

Impact on Society

The rise of deviant sects in Indonesia has caused many serious negative impacts on the lives of society, nation and state. The negative impact is that there are often anarchic actions against followers of deviant sects in various regions of Indonesia. Many lives have been lost and those who survived have been forced to flee to places considered safe. Many are traumatized by these concerning events. The number of victims of property is also countless, houses and places of worship have been damaged or burned by angry mobs. These anarchic actions were carried out by the community because they were angry with the authorities who ignored and did not take firm action against the followers of the deviant sects. In fact, according to the assessment of the general public, this sect is a form of blasphemy and desecration of the religion they adhere to, especially Islam. The rise of deviant sects has divided the unity and unity of the nation that has been maintained so far. The security of society and the stability of the nation have been disturbed because of it. In fact, economic growth and the welfare of society depend greatly on security and stability, more than that, a divided nation cannot possibly become a great nation that is advanced and respected. (Aburrahman Abubakar Bahmid, 2023)

The existence of splinter sects in Dolok Manampang Village has a major impact on the social unity of the local community. Teachings that conflict with mainstream Islamic teachings cause horizontal tensions between residents. In many cases, relationships between family members and fellow residents become strained due to differences in understanding in terms of faith. It is not

uncommon for attitudes of mutual suspicion, distancing, and even rejection of individuals who follow deviant teachings to arise when they want to participate in social and religious activities, such as religious studies or community service. This situation has an impact on the psychological condition of the community, especially families whose family members are involved in the sect. Aqsol Arizki added that this situation can cause divisions in households, such as conflicts between children and parents, husband and wife, or between siblings due to differences in beliefs. This situation gives rise to small groups that are exclusive and closed, thus worsening social interactions and disrupting the stability of society as a whole. (Aqsol Arizki, 2025)

Informant Riski Nurdillah argued that the spread of these teachings not only caused social conflict, the spread of splinter sects also had a negative impact on the religious conditions of the Dolok Manampang village community. Teachings that deviate from the main principles of Islam, such as monotheism, sharia law, and moral values, make some residents feel confused and have difficulty distinguishing which teachings are correct. When society accepts various conflicting religious understandings, feelings of doubt and distrust of local religious figures begin to grow. As a result of this condition, an attitude of distancing themselves from religious activities arises because of fears of being trapped in erroneous teachings. This has an impact on the cessation of the process of spiritual guidance and religious education in the community. If not handled immediately, this symptom has the potential to weaken religious enthusiasm and damage the foundations of the faith of Muslims, especially among the younger generation who are still vulnerable to outside influences. (Riski Nurdillah, 2025)

Response from Community and Religious Figures

The emergence of splinter sects in the Dolok Manampang Village community has given rise to various reactions from various elements of society. This study presents the results of interviews with two residents, namely Rizka Putri Anggraini and Novianti, and one religious figure, Ustazah Fadilah. The purpose of this interview was to explore the views and steps taken by the community in responding to the existence of religious groups that are considered to deviate from the principles of Islamic teachings that are adhered to by the majority.

Rizka Putri Anggraini, a housewife who actively participates in religious study groups in her neighborhood, expressed her concerns about the spread of religious doctrines that she considers deviant from the Islamic teachings that people have long believed in. She said that residents have become more careful and limit social interactions with members of the group because they are worried about its influence on the younger generation.

"We are worried that the children will be influenced. The teachings are very different from what we understand from the pengajian. Therefore, we prefer to keep our distance and be vigilant." (Rizka Putri Anggraini, 2025). Rizka also added that this attitude was not merely a form of rejection, but an effort to maintain the purity of religious teachings and prevent division at the community level, especially in joint activities such as religious studies and congregational prayers.

Novianti, a young woman who is active in the management of the mosque youth and village social activities, highlighted the greater threat among young people. According to her, the younger generation is very vulnerable to religious information circulating on social media, including from splinter groups that spread confusing understandings. *"Their preaching content often appears on social media and is often misleading. Friends who do not yet have a strong understanding of religion are easily carried away. That's why we actively participate in religious studies and discuss with each other among teenagers to stay on the right track."* (Novianti, 2025)

He also suggested that related parties provide more intensive religious education that is contextual and adaptive to digital developments, so that young people do not fall into erroneous religious beliefs.

Mualimah Fadilah, one of the female religious figures in the village who has long been active in the field of Islamic education and the development of the taklim assembly, views the emergence of deviant beliefs as a serious challenge that requires a planned and comprehensive approach to preaching. She explained that her party routinely holds religious activities that focus on strengthening faith and straightening out understanding. *"We hold lectures that discuss faith and introduce the characteristics of deviations from teachings. The material is prepared by referring to Sharia propositions so that people understand which teachings are correct and which are deviant."* (Mualimah Fadilah, 2025)

Furthermore, Ustazah Fadilah emphasized the importance of a dialogical approach to groups with different understandings. She believes that open dialogue can be an effective way to reduce potential conflict and build shared understanding. *"It is not enough to just reject, we also need to open a space for dialogue so that we can find out their reasons and explain the truth of Islam in a wise and polite way."* (Mualimah Fadilah, 2025)

In addition to her role in strengthening religious education, Ustazah Fadilah is also actively involved in cooperation with community leaders, village officials, and traditional elements to formulate joint solutions. She believes that handling this problem must involve all levels of society in order to maintain social integrity and harmony: *"If all religious figures, village heads, and traditional figures synergize, then the solutions built will be more acceptable and effective. What is important is not only rejecting deviant views, but also creating a peaceful and wise way out."* (Mualimah Fadilah, 2025)

Efforts to Strengthen Aqidah and Maintain Social Harmony

One of the fundamental steps that must be taken in dealing with the spread of splinter sects in society is to strengthen the understanding of the correct aqidah according to the teachings of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah. Religious education is the main key in protecting the community from the influence of deviant ideologies. In the context of Dolok Manampang Village, the educational approach is not only carried out through formal channels such as madrasahs and schools, but also through regular religious studies in mosques, religious study groups, and Islamic circles at the family and community levels. This effort involves the active role of ustaz, religious teachers, and community leaders who have a deep understanding of moderate Islam and rahmatan lil 'alamin. The religious materials taught must emphasize the importance of monotheism, a comprehensive understanding of Islamic law, and recognize signs of deviation in the understanding of religion that can lead to division of the community.

The existence of splinter sects in Dolok Manampang Village has inspired the community and local religious figures to respond actively in order to maintain the purity of Islamic faith and ensure the maintenance of a peaceful social order. Based on interviews with Leni Puspita, an active teenager in the mosque youth community, and Ustad Hamim Is, an influential religious figure in the village, various strategic approaches were found in facing the challenges of this deviation of teachings.

Leni Puspita emphasized that the rapid flow of digital information, especially Islamic content on social media, is a challenge for teenagers who do not yet have a strong religious foundation. She stated that the emergence of deviant teachings in her village triggered awareness among young people about the importance of obtaining religious knowledge from authoritative sources.

"We as the younger generation are more concerned about religious education. Because if we don't understand, we can easily be influenced by wrong content even though it looks Islamic." (Leni Puspita, 2025)

To protect herself and her friends, Leni initiated a youth religious discussion forum, utilizing social media and WhatsApp groups as a place to share knowledge from the religious studies they attended. In addition, they also created short content in the form of quotes of dalil and light but enlightening preaching messages.

"Through social media, we share study materials and quotes from ustaz so that friends remain connected to the true values of Islam, without having to wait for formal studies." (Leni Puspita, 2025). This initiative shows that teenagers are not only objects of da'wah, but also play an active role as movers in spreading the understanding of straight Islam and in maintaining social resilience from the influence of misleading teachings.

Ustad Hamim is views that overcoming deviant sects is not enough just through rejection, but needs to be handled with educational, inclusive, and collaborative preaching methods. He emphasized the importance of strengthening the foundation of the people's faith through religious studies on the theme of monotheism and the characteristics of deviant understanding in Islam. *"We focus on conveying Islamic teachings argumentatively with strong arguments, so that society has a stable understanding and is not easily swayed."* (Ustad Hamim, 2025)

He also encouraged cross-element cooperation, including village governments, traditional leaders, and youth, to develop preventive and educational measures that can strengthen social cohesion. The approach of violence or extreme exclusion of splinter groups is considered unproductive. Instead, a space for dialogue is needed that opens up opportunities to correct misunderstandings in a polite and wise manner.

"We cannot solve problems with hostility. There must be a space to talk so that they understand the true teachings. We invite them to discuss and provide enlightenment slowly." (Ustad Hamim, 2025) To maintain a balance between firm principles and social peace, Ustad Hamim initiated activities such as cross-age religious studies, da'wah safaris to residents' homes, and training of young da'i cadres, as a form of long-term community empowerment. *"Teenagers like Leni are the next generation that must be prepared. If they are properly trained, they will become the vanguard of the guardians of the people's faith."* (Ustad Hamim Is, 2025)

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study conducted in Dolok Manampang Village, Dolok Masihul District, Serdang Bedagai Regency showed that the existence of splinter sects caused quite complex problems, both in religious aspects and in the social life of the community. *First*, seen from the teachings and characteristics, the splinter sects that developed in this village showed deviations from the main teachings of Islam. These deviations were particularly apparent in terms of beliefs and worship practices that were not based entirely on the Qur'an and Sunnah, but rather were more interpretative and subjective in nature that contradicted the understanding of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah scholars. The ambiguity of these teachings resulted in confusion and doubt among the community, especially for those with minimal understanding of religion. *Second*, from a social aspect, the presence of this sect had a negative impact on the social order that had previously been harmonious. The community began to split into small groups, friction occurred between residents, and even disrupted family relationships. Religious activities became limited to certain groups, creating mutual suspicion and reducing the sense of togetherness and the spirit of mutual cooperation that had previously been the main strength of rural communities. *Third*, the community together with religious leaders gave a fairly serious reaction to the existence of this splinter sect. They showed a vigilant attitude and rejected teachings that were considered deviant. The clerics and local leaders tried to clarify and provide guidance through various preaching activities. However, the response given was not yet completely systematic and educational, so that the handling of the spread of this sect was still reactive and emotional. *Fourth*, various efforts to strengthen the faith and maintain social harmony have begun to be carried out through religious education, preaching that is educational and soothing, and the role of the family as the main fortress. In addition, synergy between religious institutions, community leaders, and village officials began to be activated through coaching and counseling programs. However, the need to increase religious literacy and more integrated collaboration between institutions is an important demand so that efforts to prevent deviant beliefs can take place comprehensively and continuously. Thus, the problems caused by the splinter sect in Dolok Manampang Village not only have an impact on tensions in theological aspects, but also shake the social structure of society.

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